

RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN

LEAFLETS
of
POPULAR INFORMATION

ESCHSCHOLTZIA PULCHELLA

AN ANNUAL CALIFORNIA-POPPY.

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Prepared
by
RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN
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NATIVE PLANTS OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Ana Canyon
Orange County
California

ESCHSCHOLTZIA PULCHELLA
AN ANNUAL CALIFORNIA-POPPY

Papaveraceae

Poppy Family

Dainty annual about 6 in. high; leaves and flowers arising from a very abbreviated stem. Herbage pale green, glabrous except for a few short bristles along lower portion of stems and petioles. Leaves 3 to 4 in. long, variously divided into 3 to 7 flattened, filiform divisions about $1/8$ in. broad and up to 1 in. long. Flowers solitary on slender pedicels rising 1 to 3 in. above tips of leaves. Flower buds about $1/4$ in. long with a short beaked calyptra (fused caplike body composed of fused sepals which is pushed off as flower opens). Base of flower without collar or rim as in perennial species. Petals 4, broadly fan-shaped, about $3/8$ inch long, clear light yellow with upper surface a deeper shade than the lower. Stamens about 15 with brownish pencil markings near base of filaments. Stigmas generally 4, yellow, capping the green, 1-celled, 2-valved ovary. Capsule erect, 2 to 3 in. long, scarcely more than $1/8$ in. thick, opening from base and forcibly scattering the seeds. Seeds nearly spherical, less than $1/16$ in. in diameter, brown, surface variously reticulated but not with pronounced bur-like processes as in E. Iobbii. In germination the cotyledons are entire (in perennial species such as E. californica the cotyledons are forked).

The genus Eschscholtzia is confined to Western North America, but is best represented in California where many distinctive species are found. The original California-Poppy was described by A. von Chamisso in 1820 in honor of Dr. J. F. Eschscholtz, the two having been on a voyage of exploration which visited San Francisco in 1816. Some botanists have recognized more than 100 species of Eschscholtzia. Handbooks and manuals on California botany generally consolidate most of these into about 10 to 15 kinds, but as more careful studies are made it is likely that this number will have to be increased, for any careful student can find plants of this genus in the field which will not satisfactorily fit the text of the manuals.

Eschscholtzia pulchella (specific name meaning the diminutive of pulchus, the Latin word for beautiful) was described in 1905 by Prof. E. L. Greene, California botanist and author of a great many species of Eschscholtzia. Prof. Greene had apparently studied this species in the field for many years, but in his writings failed to designate the exact spot from which his type

came (the type being the specimen on which a new species is based), but merely stated that it was "plentiful among the lowest foothills of the Sierra Nevada". E. pulchella is very similar to E. Lobbii, another species of the Sierra Nevada foothills, and many botanists regard the two as one species. There are pronounced differences which stand out between the two when both are compared in the fresh state. E. pulchella is a somewhat smaller plant with pale green rather than olive green herbage; its leaves have broader divisions; its flowers are slightly smaller and a lighter shade of yellow; the seeds, although reticulated, are not covered with conspicuous bur-like processes and are consistently smaller in diameter.

E. pulchella appears to be restricted in the wild to the Sierra Nevada foothills at elevations of 1000 to 1500 feet, where it grows in coarse, sterile soils. Our strain was obtained in May, 1933, from along the North Fork of the Tule River a few miles from Springville, Tulare Co. The dainty beauty of this tiny annual has captivated all who have seen it in our plantings. It is so different from the perennial California-Poppy that many people find it difficult to believe that both are members of the same genus.

Propagation of E. pulchella is by seeds planted in the fall or winter in the spots where they are to bloom. A sunny location in coarse sandy or rocky soil is ideal, such as among the rocks of our Cactus Garden. Individual plants bloom for about two months, generally beginning in March. When at their best a single plant may have 40 to 50 flowers open at one time, thus completely hiding the pale green herbage. After flowering the plants must be carefully watched if the seeds are to be harvested, for the capsules scatter the seeds soon after they are ripe. Under ideal conditions the plants may volunteer year after year, but in most gardens cultural practices prevent this.

Eschscholtzia pulchella has no known common or English name. Let us keep this little annual California-Poppy free from some purely fabricated English name and use its specific name pulchella, remembering that its literal translation means little beauty. What more fitting name could be applied to this tiny masterpiece of Nature's handiwork?

RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN
Of The Native Plants of California.
Established 1927

In Memory of John W. Bixby.

(Mrs.) Susanna Bixby Bryant , Founder and Managing Director.

PURPOSE: A scientific institution devoted to the growth and study of native plants of California for their botanical, horticultural and popular features.

ADMINISTRATION: The Garden Foundation was legally established in 1934 under which the properties and endowment were placed in the hands of a self-perpetuating board of 5 trustees as follows: Mr. Allen L. Chickering (chairman), Mrs. Susanna Bixby Bryant, Mr. Stuart O'Melveny, Mr. Irving M. Walker and Mr. Ernest A. Bryant, Jr.

SITE: Consists of about 200 acres of land with varied slopes, exposures and soil types, and elevations ranging from 500 to 1000 feet. Plantings have amounted to many thousands of plants each year and now represent over one-half of the kinds of trees and shrubs of the state as well as many of the finest perennials and annuals.

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING: Designed and built to house the Herbarium and Library for use by the Garden research department.

HERBARIUM: Over 22,000 pressed plant specimens and many supplementary collections of cones, seeds and wood samples.

LIBRARY: Approximately 2,000 botanical books and many periodicals, maps, photographs, etc.

ASSEMBLY HALL: Flower shows and lectures on visitor's days.

EXPLORATION: Field work in California occupies a place of major importance and the staff devotes considerable time each year to making field notes, herbarium collections and obtaining propagation materials in all parts of the state.

NURSERY: For propagating the materials collected.

VISITING DAYS: Fridays (10 A.M. to 4 P.M.) during April, May and June by card only, obtainable by forwarding a self-addressed stamped envelope, stating date preferred, to:

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden,
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